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Mary Lou Wendell

David Tyler

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ISLAND TIMES

NOVEMBER 2005

A community newspaper covering the islands of Casco Bay

FREE

Despite suburban sprawl, signs are hopeful for Casco Bay

BY DAVID TYLER

In the past five years, has the environmental health of Casco Bay improved or worsened?

That's an extremely complex question, but the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership provided its analysis with the release of the report "State of the Bay 2005," presented at a conference held in South Portland on Nov. 3 and hosted by the partnership.

Karen Young, executive director of the estuary partnership, said the bay's watershed is much to complex to give the health of the region a letter grade, for example.

She is hopeful about the bay's future. "I am optimistic," she said, before the conference was held. "Primarily because we have an incredibly precious resource and I think people in this area recognize that. And I think we have a real commitment on the part of people to try and protect what we have."

"The State of the Bay 2005," is the first report on the health of the bay and watershed since 2000. "The 2000 document had much less scientific information," said Young.

"It was aimed to be an educational document. Our goal with this report was to compile all the data we had access to, that we've collected, or through our partners, and to compile it over the last decade, in a lot of cases."

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership is a federally funded organization that works cooperatively with businesses, individuals and groups to protect and restore the water quality and wildlife habitat of Casco Bay while ensuring compatible uses by people, and is hosted at the University of Southern Maine Muskie School of Public Service. The organization was created by the federal government in 1990.

The State of the Bay report examines 14 indicators of the health of Casco Bay and its watershed. The region consists of 41 municipalities with just 3 percent of the state's land area, but one-quarter of the state's population. The watershed stretches from Cape Elizabeth to Cape Small along the coast, and northwest into Bethel.

The 14 health indicators are: please see CASCO BAY, page 11

Voters to decide Nov. 8 whether Chebeague secedes

BY DAVID TYLER

On Nov. 8, residents of Cumberland will vote on whether Chebeague Island should secede.

Although all town residents get to vote, the total for Chebeague Island will be counted separately from the rest of the town.

On Chebeague Island, proponents of secession have said Cumberland has changed so much that mainland residents longer has anything in common with Chebeague. Advocates also believe that self-governance is the only way for islanders to preserve Chebeague's year-round community, in the face

of threats to the island school and the island way of life. They believe they can run a more efficient government which would respond directly to island concerns.

Opponents are concerned that self-governance could lead to divisiveness in the tight-knit island community and worry that secession will not solve the problem of gentrification of the island. They also fear that leaving the school district will harm island students access to mainland secondary schools.

During the week before the vote, please see CHEBEAGUE, page 10

Low enrollment results in cuts to Peaks daycare

BY DAVID TYLER

The Peaks Island Children's Workshop has laid off one teacher



The Peaks Island Children's Workshop has downsized its staff due to low enrollment.

and reduced the executive director's position to half-time.

The cuts are due to decreased enrollment in the workshop's pre-school program, according to Melissa Conrad, president of the Board of Directors.

There are 11 kids in the pre-school program this fall, compared to 21 children in the program at this time last year. "We had fewer kids and too many teachers, and we're looking to a future with not many please see DAYCARE, page 4



Ferry service is a lifeline for islanders.

The Casco Bay Lines ferry Island Romance docks at Peaks Island on a sunny November day. Skyrocketing fuel costs have led to a proposal to consider trip cuts for the ferry.

Photo by Mary Lou Wendell

CBITD faces budget shortfall

BY DAVID TYLER

Due to skyrocketing fuel costs, Casco Bay Lines faces a projected \$180,000 shortfall in its upcoming budget.

As part of plans to cope with that projected shortfall, the Operations Committee of the Casco Bay Lines Island Transit District (CBITD) voted on Oct. 28 to eliminate four seasonal trips. In addition, the possibility of rate hikes were being considered.

However, Patrick Christian, Casco Bay Lines' general manager, said it is possible that

federal transportation funds could be used for the operating budget of Casco Bay Lines for fiscal year 2006.

If these funds are used it would change budget discussions at CBITD, he said. The federal funds could be between \$150,000 and \$175,000.

"If this looks like a viable option, then the pressure to make cuts or increase fares would be dramatically diminished," said Christian.

Although he had been looking into the use of this money for fiscal 2006, it was only

through conversations with Maine Department of Transportation officials during the week of Oct. 31 that convinced Christian these federal funds could be used. "We've still got to work on this; it's premature to say that this is a done deal," Christian said.

Casco Bay Lines, like all companies using fuel, has seen tremendous price hikes over the past two years. Christian said fuel costs for fiscal year 2004 were \$190,000. In fiscal 2005, that bill jumped to \$316,000, please see FERRY SERVICE, page 6

Noted NYC actor brings provocative drama to Peaks

BY FAITH YORK

The rumors on the boat are hard to ignore. Neighbors are being investigated. Arrested even. For no apparent reason. Yes, they celebrate different holidays than you do, but is that really the deal? People you know are disappearing, and you're not sure what's become of them.

Suddenly, you are no longer allowed in the library. Movie theaters close their doors to you. As do political conventions. It's been noticed that you're a sympathizer for a cause that differs from the viewpoint of the powers-that-be. Or, your choice of friends or partners is not quite mainstream. So, one day, you find you have lost your job. And now, it seems like you're being followed. Even taking a walk is risky.

Sound unlikely? What is that quote? If we don't learn from the past...

The Temple Stream Theater, in an effort to dramatize the responsibility of the individual to bear witness against injustice be it at home or abroad, is bring-

ing George Bartenieff's and Karen Malpede's internationally acclaimed stage adaptation of the diaries of Victor Klemperer to Maine.

Bartenieff, who has performed "I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer, Part 1, 1933-38," some 250 times in North America and Europe, including a performance at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, will be performing this one-man show at the Brackett Memorial Church on Peaks Island on November 18 at 7:30 pm.

"Bartenieff's thought-provoking stage adaptation of Klemperer's diaries is in the tradition of theater that has the power to inspire action against injustice," says Michael Romanyshyn, director of the five-year-old Temple Stream Theater, which is housed in a renovated Congregational Church in Temple, Maine (near Farmington).

"The performance is more than the record one man made of the denial of human dignity and the dehumanization of life dur-

ing the Third Reich," said Romanyshyn. "It is a provocative work that reminds us of the need to bear witness and of the need to be vigilant in our own defense of civil liberties and against the demonization of the 'other'." Romanyshyn, son of island resident Annie Romanyshyn, is responsible for bringing Bartenieff to Maine.

But it's not his first time here. For starters, in 1949, Bartenieff performed alongside another young actor named Mickey Rooney in the old Gem Theater on Peaks Island.

Romanyshyn has worked side by side with Bartenieff in shows at the Bread and Puppet Theater please see DRAMA, page 8

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In Brief

Affordable housing discussed

The Long Island Board of Selectmen talked about the possibility of the town providing affordable housing on the island at an October meeting, according to Mark Greene, Long Island's Town Moderator.

Greene said the discussions are at a very preliminary stage. "We're trying to stimulate some thinking on it and start a process going," he said.

Two of Long Island's Selectmen, Stephen Train and Ruth Peterson, attended the Island Institute's May 8 Casco Bay Forum on affordable housing, along with Greene.

"We've got a fair amount of town land to offer as sites," he said. There is one, four-acre parcel that is part of the old Northland subdivision. There is another parcel on the West End of about eight or nine acres that Long Island bought from the city of Portland.

The challenge, Greene said, is how to create housing that remains affordable, but would be attractive to year-round families. "The hard thing is making sure that people stay year-round," he said.

Although Long Island has kept its taxes down, the high cost of housing is driving families off the island. Greene said a family with three children moved off Long Island to West Falmouth this summer because they could not find an affordable house on the island.

-David Tyler

Changes proposed to Exit 15

Maine's Department of Transportation (MDOT) has proposed major changes to Exit 15 on Interstate 295. The exit is nearby the Route 1 satellite parking lot in Cumberland, which is used by the Chebeague Transportation Company for parking for those who do not have stickers for the Cousins Island lot.

The proposals, which are preliminary,

were unveiled at an October meeting of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee (PACTS), a federally-mandated group to make sure that transportation money is spent effectively in the Greater Portland area.

Among the changes the state is proposing are: to build a new northbound Exit 15 ramp connecting Route 1 to I-295; build a new, longer southbound entrance ramp and extend the existing southbound Exit 15 deceleration lane.

In addition, the MDOT's Office of Passenger Transportation is looking at the possibility of setting up a park-and-ride lot on the western side of Exit 15. The passenger transportation office also is investigating the possibility of starting passenger rail along the I-295 corridor, using the existing St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway line, according to Ron Roy, director of the passenger office. Roy did not think these plans would impact the island parking lot.

Roy said that Amtrak's Downeaster is looking at expanding service north of Portland, which means an opportunity for track upgrades that would allow commuter rail on the tracks. "This is a busy enough corridor, you're talking about folks who work on the Portland peninsula and giving them an opportunity to take the train in," he said.

-David Tyler

Peaks secession workshop

The City Council is coming to Peaks Island to talk about secession.

There will be a City Council workshop held at the Peaks Island Elementary School on Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m. to talk about secession. "The council will review information, formulated by staff, assessing the impact of secession on both Peaks Island and the city," assuming the drive was successful, said Tom Fortier, the city's island/neighborhood administrator.

Meanwhile, proponents of Peaks Island secession have signatures of over 50 percent of the island's registered voters on a petition requiring a hearing with the City of Portland to discuss secession. The Island Indepen-

dence Committee has not picked a date yet when it will submit the petition, according to Judy Piawluck.

As the signatures were gathered, Piawluck said the group has been going over the list of 1,067 registered voters that the City Clerk's office has for Peaks Island. She said this list is not accurate. "We have 12 deceased people," on the voter rolls, Piawluck said. There are also residents of Cushing Island listed as Peaks voters. The group plans to bring these inaccuracies to the attention of the City Clerk, she said.

-David Tyler

Council to vote on Cat deal

The Portland City Council is scheduled to vote at its Nov. 7 meeting on a deal that would bring high-speed ferry service between Portland and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia to the city.

Bay Ferries Limited is seeking to lease the International Marine Terminal for two years to operate *The Cat*, a high-speed ferry which can carry up to 900 passengers and 240 cars and travel as fast as 55 m.p.h. Bay Ferries Limited is subsidiary of a Prince Edward Island company which also operates ferries on Lake Erie and between Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, according to the company Web site.

The deal would bring the city less revenue than what was collected from the *Scotia Prince*, according to published sources. In the first year, *The Cat's* lease calls for a payment of \$132,000 plus tariffs of 75 cents per passenger, \$1 per car and \$10 per bus or truck. In the first year, the overall payments could not exceed \$200,000 to \$225,000. The agreement would be re-negotiated in two years, and does not contain a clause banning competition with *The Cat*. The service would be offered from June to mid-October.

The *Scotia Prince* brought in approximately \$400,000 annually in lease payments. City officials have said it was important to get the service running again because of competition from other cities, such as Boston, which might set up service to the Canadian Mari-

times.

If the deal is approved, Portland's gain would be Bar Harbor's loss. *The Cat* would travel between Portland and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia three days a week, and from Bar Harbor to Yarmouth four days a week.

The Cat now travels between Bar Harbor and Yarmouth at least once a day from mid-May to mid-October.

The *Scotia Prince* served as the ferry between Portland and Yarmouth for 35 years until service ended this spring. In April of this year, the owners of the *Scotia Prince* told employees it would not operate in 2005 because of a mold problem in the terminal. City officials said they spent \$1.2 million fixing the problem and were never told the owners were unhappy with the work.

The day after the season was cancelled by the owners of the *Scotia Prince*, Portland officials terminated the company's docking lease for the International Terminal. The *Scotia Prince* was then put up for sale for \$14 million.

-David Tyler

Ground broken for Ocean Gateway

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Ocean Gateway took place on Oct. 3, seven years after the project began.

Gov. John Baldacci, and Maine Congressmen Tom Allen and Michael Michaud joined local and state officials at the ceremony.

The project's total cost is now \$20.7 million, with \$3.6 million coming from the City of Portland, \$4.5 million in federal funds and \$12.6 million from the state. The project includes construction of a marine passenger terminal and receiving station and the building of a new street linking Fore Street to the new terminal.

The facility was designed by Woodward & Curran, of Portland along with Winton Scott Architects. Reed & Reed of Woolwich was awarded the bid to build the facility in June.

Construction on the project was expected to begin in the summer. But on March 2, the bids for the project all came in considerably higher than what had been budgeted for the

please see BRIEFS, page 9

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I scream for Halloween on Peaks

BY ARNE PEARSON

Peaks Island spooks who made the annual hike up Welch Street to Scott and Nancy Nash's house this Halloween found a haunted "I Scream" truck parked in the front yard. After being greeted by a begging monkey, a roving eyeball and a cast of other creepy characters, trick-or-treaters had to scream to get an ice cream treat at the truck window.

This was the ninth year that the Nashes and their friends put on an elaborate show for islanders. The collaborative effort is a "little bit of structure and a little bit of jazz improvisation," Scott Nash said. The theme is chosen in advance, but the Nashes often don't know what their friends are going to do with it until they show up on Halloween night. "We've got a little bunch of Halloween geniuses," Nash said.

In addition to the Nashes, this year's performers included Ted Smykal, who built the neon "I scream" sign and other props, Gary Brookman, Ryan and Darcy Evans, Doug Smith, Kathie Schneider, Tim Nihoff, Kathleen Beecher, Kyle Nash and Perry Sutherland.

Northeast Ice Cream, which serves ice cream down by the State Pier every summer, provided the truck and 500 ice cream bars "for next to nothing," and the Planters helped get the truck out to Peaks, Nash said. The creepy crew donated the leftovers to the Peaks Island Elementary School, the Peaks Island Children's Workshop and the Preble Street Resource Center.

"It's like we had a little ice cream social after all the bad weather," Nash said. "This is the best place for Halloween I've ever lived."



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Island Views

Group says: Let Peaks Islanders make it's own decisions

BY MICHAEL LANGELLA, HOWARD PEDLIKIN,
MICHAEL RICHARDS AND PAM TEDFORD

In the past, important decisions about Peaks Island have always been made by the City of Portland, not by Peaks Islanders.

As a result, Peaks Islanders have had to abide by the consequences of those decisions, leaving them no adequate means of addressing their grievances. For example, the city conducts property revaluations for tax purposes, sets the mill rate for spending, and decides what spending to allot to Peaks Island, and how the money is spent.

The city decides what the island needs for services, including education, public works, fire and police, land use, and other public services. Thus, decisions about Peaks Island are made in Portland by city councilors who don't live on the island, and who know less about the island than islanders.

Many Peaks Islanders believe that the City Council, in public forums, has been non-responsive to present island issues. Self-government would allow decisions about Peaks Island to be made by Peaks islanders.

After the city's property tax revaluations earlier this year, the Island Independence Committee (IIC) formed to gather information and present it to our community, city and state; so we can decide together whether the island and its people should govern itself, which is its unalienable and inalienable right under the Maine Constitution.

The Maine Legislature has created a statute establishing a framework for proceeding with secession and self-government. It requires: 1. A petition signed by a majority of voters; 2. A public hearing with the City

Council; 3. A local vote on secession; 4. A vote of the city councilors; 5. Mediation of differences, and; 6. A proposal to the legislature. The IIC intends to then hold a binding vote on Peaks Island, after all the information is known.

Recently, the IIC has circulated petitions which have been signed by nearly 600 voters, more than a majority of those on Portland's voter registration list. There is disagreement about the current number of registered voters because of deaths or moves by islanders.

It is the position of the IIC that the number of registered voters is less than the number claimed by the City Clerk in Portland. The IIC will present the petitions to the city when it is ready to proceed to hearing.

Concurrently the IIC has created several working groups to focus on the various aspects of town government, and the groups have begun compiling data necessary for the islanders to make this decision.

The city is providing most of the facts and figures. The groups will present their findings at meetings of the IIC on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at the Community Center.

Education was already presented on Oct. 20. Police, Government, and Water and Sewer will present on Nov. 3; Land Use and Fire and Emergency on Nov. 17; Public Works and Social Services on Dec. 1; Public Works and Finances on Dec. 15. The IIC will arrange public forums on secession issues, and encourages interested islanders to attend our meetings and join in the discussion, to ensure that all views are considered.

DAYCARE, from page 1

kids coming in," said Colleen Mitchell, the workshop's executive director.

The changes were announced in a letter sent to parents on Oct. 31. It's the first time in Mitchell's experience as director that there has been a layoff, she said. Mitchell has been the workshop's executive director for four-and-one-half years.

Teacher Julie Doughty, who was at the workshop for eight years, was cut, effective Nov. 4. The workshop is holding an appreciation party for Doughty that afternoon.

Effective Nov. 15, Mitchell's full-time position as director will be reduced to half-time. She said the board is working on "what my position will look like once I've changed down to half-time," she said.

After the cuts, there will be two, full-time teachers and one, part-time teacher at the workshop, which is a nonprofit.

"These are big changes for us, but the quality and nurturing care at the workshop is not going to change," said Mitchell.

The decision of who to cut was made based on seniority, according to Conrad. One full-time teacher has been at the workshop for 20 years; the other two teachers have each been there over 30 years.

The workshop has known for a year that it would lose children, since 13 kids entered kindergarten at the Peaks Island Elementary School this fall, said Conrad, but it was expected that more children would sign up again in the fall, which has been the pattern in the past. And the board thought it would be able to shift staff to the afternoon program to avoid cuts.

There are 16 kids enrolled in the afternoon program this fall, compared to about 18 last year, according to Mitchell.

"We wracked our brains trying to think how to keep the staff member; it was heartbreaking," said Conrad. "It's not that this was taken lightly at all. This was a very valued employee who will go on to have a great career."

Conrad said the lower enrollment is also a result of increasing housing prices on Peaks Island. "We've talked about the gentrification of Peaks Island and housing prices affecting families on the island for years," she said. "We have lost families and they have not been replaced by other families."

"It's very challenging to manage in a time of change," Conrad said.

Mitchell said enrollment in the preschool program has always fluctuated. "The kids kind of come in and out of the program in waves," she said. Enrollment tends to be lower in the fall, as children enter kindergarten. But there are usually new children, as island kids become old enough to attend or as families move to Peaks for winter rentals.

"We're not seeing as many families coming back to the islands," Mitchell said. This fall, there were no new enrollments due to winter rentals.

Both Conrad and Mitchell said the staff cuts are also the result of a change in how

families use the workshop.

In the past, two-parent working families used the workshop for day care, said Conrad.

Now, there are more parents working at home. "There's not as big a demand for full-time day care anymore," Conrad said. Parents are using the workshop one or two days a week for enrichment and socialization before their children go into kindergarten.

That change means the workshop needs to change, as well. "We need to evolve to meet the needs of the community, and right now full-time child care is not the biggest need," said Mitchell.

"Staff reduction is never easy, but this is an exciting time of evolution for the workshop," Conrad wrote in the letter.

As a result of the change in the use of the workshop, Conrad said new programs will be added to meet those needs.

This year, the workshop will offer vacation camp, during the school holidays in February and April. The workshop also plans to expand its Parent's Night Out program to be offered six times in the coming year.

Conrad said she would also like to increase the enrollment in the popular Island Rovers summer camp program run by the workshop. There are many older children from Portland attending summer camps on Peaks Island, and their younger siblings could also come out to the island. If the workshop advertised Island Rovers at camp fairs and in mainland newspapers for parents, "it could be a source of income and a source of new children," she said. "We see that as a niche we could fill."

In mid-August, the board was concerned about the numbers for the preschool, but the board thought that staff could be shifted into the afternoon to avoid layoffs. By September, it was clear the pre-school enrollment would be low. "We had a lot of teachers and not a lot of students," said Conrad.

"We have a healthy afternoon program, but it's not enough to entail an extra staff member," Conrad said. Cuts were discussed at the Oct. 12 regular board meeting. A special board meeting was called for Oct. 26, which is when the decision to cut one teacher and reduce the director's position to half-time was made.

The Peaks Island Children's Workshop is the only island organization which still received city Housing and Community Development funding, according to Tom Fortier, the city's island/neighborhood administrator. City funding, based on the income of the families with children in the center, was \$25,000 last year.

The island child care center was first established in 1972 and was run in the basement of St. Christopher's Parish Hall, according to a description of the workshop on the United Way Web site.

In 1991, it was decided to raise money for a new facility. With community support, \$400,000 was raised to build the current facility.

Letters to the Editor

Memories of Arnold

The article on Arnold Berndt was very good ("Friends recall Arnold Berndt's dignity, principles," October issue). He had such an interesting life. He taught me the finer points of sailing: the white-knuckle-I'm-getting-WET-Arnold kind. Or saying, "Don't bother to paddle; the wind will come up" as we drifted, becalmed, out to sea between Long Island and Pumpkin Knob. And when the tide turned to come in, by gum, the wind DID come up, and we sailed home.

-Mary Ann Sanford, Peaks Island

Kitty killed by dogs

We are saddened, and infuriated, by the killing of our favorite kitty by two dogs, on Peaks Island.

Shame on the dog owner-murderers in this case. You are a blight upon the joy of island life for bereft child pet owners and adults who value true community well-being.

For years there have been complaints about killings and harassment by dogs running loose on the island. There needs to be an end to the denial of their irresponsible owners of loose-running dogs on Peaks which wreak such havoc. Unrestrained dog behavior is a plague (including literally as dog feces cause lupus and are forbidden on playgrounds) endangering the lives of pets, children and adults, from the mailman on.

We ask for community support for islanders and the island police, who enforce the dog leash law and proper training of dogs and their owners to prevent such tragic loss of life. Attitudes about dogs need to change against dog-owner narcissism and in favor of community well-being.

In memory of Lovey, the most gentle kitty we ever knew. May you rest in peace, gentle soul and beloved pet.

-Norma and Chris Floyd, Peaks Island

Changes at workshop

I am sending this letter to keep the community abreast of the changes at the Peaks Island Children's Workshop. We appreciate the support received from the community and wish to communicate the challenges that face the workshop.

As many of you know, the number of Peaks Island families with young children has dropped significantly in recent years. Accordingly, the number of children at the workshop has also fallen. The board has made several decisions to ensure the continuation of the quality program the workshop provides.

First we will be adding some new programs, such as school vacation camp during other school closings. We will also expand other programs, like Parent's Night Out, which will be offered six times this year. We hope your family finds these programs useful.

The next issue the board tackled was the staffing level. Due to lower enrollment and the resulting lower funding and fees, we needed to reduce the staff level. This was done to ensure the long-term viability of the workshop, and was the hardest decision the board has ever made. I assure you it was made with input from the staff and with the assurances that the quality care the workshop provides will not be affected.

Please feel free to talk to me about any questions you have about the changes. Staff reduction is never easy but we are at an exciting time of evolution for the Workshop. The board and staff are working hard to make the necessary changes to ensure a prosperous future for the Peaks Island Children's Workshop. Thanks for all your support.

-Melissa Conrad, Board President, Peaks Island Children's Workshop

ISLAND TIMES

A community newspaper covering Peaks Island

Publishers: Mary Lou Wendell/David Tyler

Member of the New England Press Association.

The *Island Times* is a community newspaper covering the islands in Casco Bay. We welcome birth, engagement and wedding announcements; obituaries; notices of community events; and letters to the editor. Please try to keep letters to 300 words or less. We reserve the right to edit all letters. The newspaper is available by mail for \$20 a year. Address checks to *Island Times*. Our mailing address is 146 Ledgewood Rd., Peaks Island, Maine, 04108. To reach Mary Lou Wendell, call 766-0951; to reach David Tyler, call 273-3408. Our e-mail address is itimes@maine.rr.com. For ad rates, call 766-0951.

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This island life

BY GEORGE ROSOL

Worldwide catastrophes have stirred the prophets of doom to cry, "The end is near!" But the god of nature is a subtle god and doesn't sweat the big stuff. A look at other indicators is more telling about the end of times.

Naming just a few—the unexplainable collapse of a car wheel, the wooly worm switching to cotton, household projects completed on time, the precipitous drop in the property tax mill rate, turn-away crowds for poetry readings and Saturday night movies at Peaks Island library, the opening of a hookah lounge on the corner of Pleasant and Dreams, a Powerball winner treating islanders to free fuel oil, and fifth graders solving the *Island Times* crossword puzzle.

When enough of these improbabilities pile up, critical mass is achieved and, well, we arrive at The End. But, "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia," said Charles Schultz, creator of Peanuts.

Following a dinner of cow's hoof stew, listed at the Asian Buffet as moo-shoe beef, I was treated to the following nightmare. A Near-Eastern potentate, a particular friend of the current administration, requested and was granted, out of gratitude, a lease to the state of Maine, because his company discovered oil under the water reserves of Poland Springs. Maine became an emirate and there were changes.

Our outdoor outfitter in Freeport became El El Bean. Akbar Harbor was now the place to be on Mt. Desert. With Desert pronounced as in Sahara. Closer to home, Battery Steele became a repository for much of the gold that began to pile shamelessly in the back yards of the sheiks. Trucks loaded with ingots rumbled down Brackett day and

night. Guards on two humped camels patrolled the battery.

The head sheik looked down upon his creation and said that it was good. There were jobs, there was money and, of course, there were envious murmurs to the south. Tired of living free, our neighbors produced a map that proved that the state of Maine and all the lands extending to the Arctic Circle belonged to them. The ruling sheik in response dug into his deep pockets and prepared to buy the state that I assumed to be New Hampshire.

At that point I was jolted awake by a perforated muffler on its way to make the 6:15. I did not wish to be awakened. A dream as real as this had to be played out.

I dressed and drove to Battery Steele and had a look-around. No gold. Someone must have got there before dawn and carted it away. Camel hoof prints? None. G-men must have smoothed them over. Eventually I came to my senses once I reasoned that either the oil well ran dry or the lease had expired.

Excitement is running high for a recently published children's book written by Peaks author, Marc Twane. This pen name, similar in pronunciation to that of Mark Twain, was chosen to allow instant recognition. A clever ruse in today's wildly competitive publishing scene. This is a minor point and not worthy of critical comment.

As for the book, it is titled "Tommy Soyer." It is the story of a boy's adventures in the post-Civil War era. He lives with an aunt, Polle, and a tom-boyish cousin named Bekky. The action takes place in a river town and, without exposing the plot, much is made, early in the book, of Tommy tricking his friends to paint a fence. Tommy and Bekky witness a terrible crime and find themselves

being hunted while in a cave.

This story has the potential to become a classic. Mr. Twane is currently working on a sequel featuring Tommy's friend, Hockbury Phynne.

The Portland city government trading cards are now available. Much like the familiar baseball and football player cards, they show an unflattering photo of an official on one side and a bio and inflated accomplishments on the other.

These can be bought with or without the sheet of pink bubble gum. The gum is handy as an indicator of support for these people. On a recent walk around city hall, it was interesting to see how many bubbles were being blown and how many pictures were being traded.

The rarest card is that of the former police chief. There is little demand

for cards of those currently in office. This will all change as time and political fortunes change. Now is the time to buy what will become collectible. City hall, hotels, motels, Commercial Street bars, and some churches have a supply for sale. I'm not sure where the cards are being sold on the islands.



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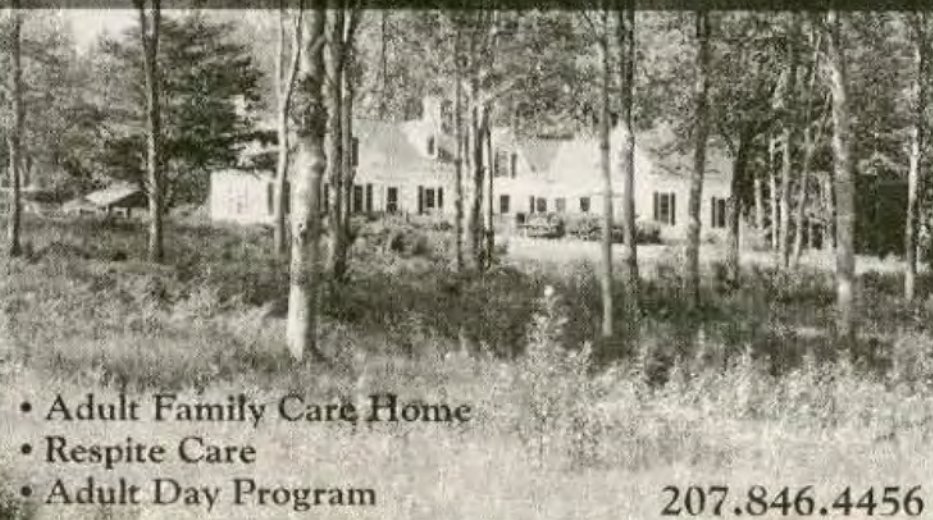
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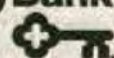
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Chebeague Chronicles

BY GORDON MURPHY

Thinking back to when I first moved to Cliff Island (prior to moving to Chebeague), one of the things I immediately was struck by was the tradition of waving to passersby. Cliff was truly multimodal, and it didn't matter if you were on foot, in a golf cart or a car (yes, Great Diamond, the two actually can coexist!), or Dave Crowley in his backhoe, or Gary MacVane in his garbage truck, everyone waved.

This was prior to my having visited other Casco Bay islands, and I wondered whether the other islands had the same custom. We moved to Chebeague and I was pleased to find out that even with paved roads and no golf carts, people were enthusiastic wavers.

As it turned out as my wife Megan and I made the rounds of Casco Bay, most of the islands do in fact have the wave tradition, even Bustins and Birch Island. Peaks is an anomaly—there are some wavers I have noticed in the off-season, but in the summer months there is so much transience that the custom seems not to take root.

My neighbor Wayne Dyer and I were talking recently about the wave, and its importance in our social interactions. Wayne pointed out that the wave is expected, and the lack of a wave to another vehicle is a thinly veiled message of displeasure. "I've had people actually call me if I haven't waved, and asked me what is wrong," remarked Wayne.

This is not to say that there aren't different levels of enthusiasm for signaling hello to others. The one- or two-fingered wave with hands still on the steering wheel is reserved for demanding summer folks or unknowns. Taking the hand

off of the wheel is the norm, and an out the window maneuver or vigorous side to side motion is overly aggressive and should be saved only for the return of the messiah, or at the very least the prodigal son, as it is the mark of the rookie to give such a display and not in all in keeping with the stoic Maine Yankee.

Different waving problems arise on a regular basis. If I'm driving at night, do I wave, even though I'm pretty sure the other car can't see me? When I go jogging, I wave to oncoming cars, but must I wave to those approaching from behind? If I'm entering or leaving the Cousins Island parking lot, is this considered an extension of the island, and should I wave? If I happen



to be driving toward the East End when the CTC car traffic is leaving to the Stone Pier, is it acceptable to leave my hand up for the entire line of traffic, or must I make individual waves?

There have been times when I have not left the island for a couple of weeks, and when I get on the mainland, I find myself waving to everyone until my wife chides me to cease this nonsense. Interestingly, the converse is true when I return home from a mainland business trip—I put on my seatbelt (it is commonly known that the laws of physics do not apply to Chebeague vehicles, thus the lack of road signs) and remove the car keys and lock my island car before Megan wakes me up.

I've been to many other islands, and some wave and some do not—I believe it is inversely proportionate to the pop-

ulation. Isle Au Haut waves, but Bermuda, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket do not. In doing a little Google research, I did find that Western Samoa and Callawassie Island, S.C. have the wave tradition as well.

There are 40 inhabited islands in Washington State; I have been to Vashon Island, which does not wave—they have a ferry the size of the *Scotia Prince*, with buses on it that bring folks to and from Seattle—but Lopez Island (pop. 2200) claims on its website it is known for its wave, and offers some insight on its origins. "While the origin of the waving tradition is unclear, some residents say it dates back to the horse-and-buggy days, when the few people inhabiting the isle used waving to neighbors as a signal that they were alive and well. No matter the beginning, islanders have incorporated 'the wave' into the order of things on Lopez."

And if one thing is for certain on Chebeague, we like to maintain the order of things.

Remembering Alnah Doughty and Nate Stewart

The island was again rocked by the deaths of two young people. One, Alnah Doughty (formerly Robinson), was expected, as she had been suffering from lung cancer for some time and had even held an "End of Life" party a few months ago, but nonetheless was marked with much sadness. Alnah was 35 and a graduate of Greely High School and Husson College, was a former island firefighter and CTC deckhand, and was an active hunter and lover of all things outdoors—she had been at her camp just prior to her death, in fact. She leaves behind her son William Robinson and many relatives on Chebeague.

The second, Nate Stewart, 25, was a shock to all. Nate was working as a chief mate on the tug, *Davis Sea*, for K-Sea Transportation, in New York Harbor near Staten Island when he lost his life when deck gear on the tug on which he was working gave way suddenly. Na-

te was a graduate of Yarmouth High and Maine Maritime. The flags at MMA flew at half-staff, and K-Sea Transportation CEO Tim Casey was quoted as stating, "We are all deeply saddened by this terrible accident. Our prayers and thoughts are with this fine man's family and loved ones. He will be missed by the entire K-Sea family." Nate was very popular, especially with many of the younger generation of fishermen on the island, and will be missed.

Big Island Odds N Ends: Tom Calder reports that he and the school kids on the bus have seen a male moose and several turkeys recently. Ellen Mahar reports that there was a huge pheasant (one of 100 that had been released on the island this fall) that was roosting in a tree near the S-curve on John Small Road when it attempted to fly away upon seeing her. Apparently it had become too chubby, as it crashed to the ground and ran away on foot ... Blueprints for the new Engine 4 are on display at the fire station. It will have an in line foam system as well as PTO hydraulic extrication equipment ... This reporter was the only Maine islander to finish the Maine Marathon (26.2 miles, from Baxter Boulevard to Yarmouth and back) Sunday, Oct. 2 in a time of 3:46:18. This was surprising as generally there is a large contingent of islanders running. There was also only one islander who finished the Half Marathon, Andrea Ernst from Peaks Island (1:50:53). I could swear I saw Mike Beaudoin from Cliff Island in the race, but I did not see him in the results. **Answer to September's Trivia Question:** From all accounts, including that of Chebeague's unofficial mayor, Edmund Doughty, Gary Varney was the last individual physically born on Chebeague. **October's Trivia Question:** What was the Chebeague Island Boat Yard structure used for prior to ship repair?

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FERRY SERVICE, from page 1

he said, and is projected to hit \$430,000 in fiscal 2006. Casco Bay Lines operates on a Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year.

From December, 2004, until Sept. 30 of this year, Casco Bay Lines had a fixed-price contract for fuel in which it paid \$1.34 a gallon, according to Nick Mavodones, operations manager for Casco Bay Lines. Since then, the ferry company has been paying market price and his waiting to lock into another fixed contract because of volatility in the oil markets, Mavodones said.

To prepare for a projected budget shortfall, the Operations Committee considered several service cuts at its Oct. 28 meeting. "The Operations Committee was charged with the task of looking at options to help balance the budget, due to the fact that we have high fuel costs staring us in the face," Christian said. "They came up with recommendations to let the public know what was being considered, but in the meantime the district was looking at other sources of revenue."

During the week of Oct. 31, public notices of the proposed service cuts were posted on the ferries and in the passenger terminal. The Operations Committee proposed cutting four runs:

- * The 10:30 p.m. run Friday night to the Down Bay islands during the summer 2006 sailing schedule.

- * The Chebeague and Cliff Island stops on the 9:30 p.m. trip during the 2006 spring and fall sailing schedules.

- * The 11:30 p.m. run (Sunday through Thursday) to Peaks Island during the summer 2006 sailing schedule.

- * The 4:15 p.m. run to Long Island and Diamond Cove during the spring A and fall B sailing schedules.

CBITD board members stressed that the cuts are proposals only and that they need to hear reactions to the idea from riders. The proposed trip cuts would save Casco Bay Lines about \$50,000, according to Charles Radis, a board member from Peaks Island.

If Casco Bay Lines is able to use the federal funds, it could eliminate the need to pursue the Operations Committee's recommendations. "The last thing we want to do is to either cut services or increase fares, so we try to exhaust all other remedies first," said Christian.

The funds would come from federal transportation money designated for rural areas. Both Long Island and Chebeague qualify as rural areas for federal transportation money, Christian said. Cliff, Great and Little Diamond and Peaks, which are all part of the City of Portland, are classified as urban areas for federal transportation money.

Over the past three years, Casco Bay Lines received \$25,000 each year from these rural highway funds to help pay for the *Aucocisco III*.

But the latest federal highway, highway safety and transit bill, signed into law on Aug. 10, contains considerably more money for rural transportation, Christian said. So the ferry company could receive as much as \$175,000 from that fund, instead of the \$25,000 it received in the past.

The reason Christian has to still investigate the use of the federal funds is due to federal regulations. "To be in compliance with federal regulations, the funds have to be allocated to the rural islands; we can't mix the funds up," he said.

CBITD's Executive Committee was scheduled to meet and talk about this latest development on Nov. 4 at 7:45 a.m. and the Finance Committee meets directly afterwards to talk about the upcoming budget. The next CBITD board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 18 at 7:45 a.m.



Cliff Island News

BY LEO CARTER

When Ruth Mistark moved to Cliff Island in May of 1978, her friends just thought she was crazy. How wrong they were!

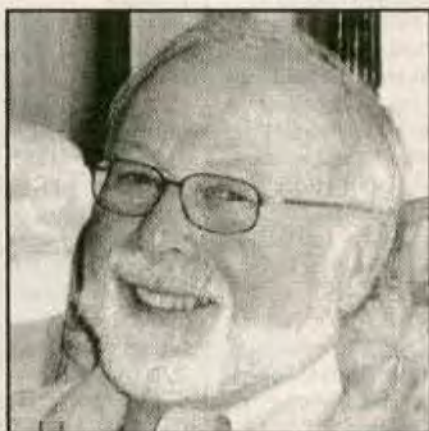
Ruth has thoroughly enjoyed living here, and said that people have been very good to her, and that it has been a "wonderful life". As of Nov. 1, Ruth is moving her life to the "brand new" Fay Garman House and Health Center on Peaks Island. She will be conveniently located near medical and other amenities, and will benefit from more frequent and shorter trips to Portland.

Cliff Islanders will miss Ruth, who has played an important role in the life of this island community over her years here. From cooking for countless island events (mmm that bread!) to serving on almost every board in Casco Bay, she has never ceased to participate.

She was president of the Cliff Island Association only three years ago. Ruth has been editor of the *Seagull*, our Cliff Island Association news letter, and has provided a meeting place in her home for the CIA in the winter (mmm those cookies).

The island knitting group, known affectionately as the Island Hookers, meets regularly at her house. Ruth's activism on Cliff was nothing new for her as she recalls serving as a ship fitter during World War II in Massachusetts, and spending many years as director of Occupational Therapy at a Massachusetts hospital.

When asked for some departing advice for Cliff Ruth paused, and then said "Don't change too much ... I hope people will visit me." Score one for Peaks!



Little takes command

Steve Little came to Cliff from an FBI career where he dealt with white-collar crimes among other things. His training, leadership skills and propensity for doing what is needed have paid off on Cliff in so many ways. He has served tirelessly as the Cliff Island Association president, and led by example on important public works here like building our new post office and roofing Paul MacVane's house.

Once, three years ago, as he returned to Cliff in his neat Coast Guard uniform, a blind man fell from the high wharf into the water below. In a flash Steve was in the water guiding him to safety. Evidently, the Coast Guard reserve recognized his talents because he has just been made commanding officer of their newest Port Security Unit PSU 301 based on Cape Cod. He's been sent to the prestigious war college as preparation for his assignment. Congratulations to Steve on the appointment, and to the CG for a wise choice!

Dispute about barge landing

Most islanders are waiting for the city of Portland to resolve a dispute with people who live on the southwest end of Cliff Island. At a September meeting with the zoning board of appeals prompted three hours of testimony from engineer Owens McCullough of Sebago Technics, an engineering firm working for the city; Mike Bobinski, who heads the Portland public works department; Steve Little, Cliff Island Association

president as well as other islanders both pro and con.

The people favoring the project pointed out the need and the minimal impact on the area. Those opposed to the project suggested that the area was pristine and would be desecrated by the project. Opposition came from the Benoit, McNitt, Seagrave and Struble families as well as a lawyer representing the Baileys and Morrells. Those opposed also argued that zoning laws would be violated, and requested more time to present their views. The board denied this request.

At its next meeting, the Zoning Board of Appeals voted in favor of the city carrying out the project by issuing a conditional use permit. A legal challenge to this ruling has been raised by Karen and Bob Bailey and Lance and Karla Morrell in Cumberland Superior Court. This opposition as well as a dispute over the boundary location could delay the project. The city, however, plans to go forward with steps such as a review with

and connecting road would represent a road spur of less than one hundred yards, including the underwater section. The existing road runs nearly a mile from the ferry landing to the last house. Several driveways branch off to the houses of the objectors and a few others. The area also has electric power lines. Pristine? Hardly.

Check out Historical Society

On September 29th five members of the Long Island Historical Society arrived on Cliff Island where they provided insights based on their successful endeavors to the relatively new Cliff Island Historical Society. This is a great example of inter-island cooperation.

How did Cliff Island become what it is today? If you come ashore at the ferry wharf, and go past the tennis court and post office you may just get some answers to this

and many other questions about the past on Cliff (or earlier Crotch) Island. CIHS was started in the summer of 2002 when a group headed by President Pam Anderson drew up some by-laws, and decided to use the vacant space under the Community Hall as its home. A volunteer building effort led by Bob Howard created a clean, light, and attractive space for small exhibitions such as Island Homes (2003) and Fishing (2004).

An early MBNA grant allowed the purchase of computers, recorders, cameras and other materials used in gathering and presenting island history. Over 900 documents, photos and oral histories have been put into the computer, and are now available for all at the Historical Society. Come see!



Ruth Mistark recently moved from Cliff Island into the new senior center on Peaks.

Photo by Alice Carter

the Harbormaster in November.

Inspection of the plans and a walk-through the area reveal that the barge ramp

er, and are now available for all at the Historical Society. Come see!

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DRAMA, from page 1

in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, where Romanynshyn was once a Puppeteer. The two toured together in a number of productions over the years.

Currently portraying the role of the Rabbi in "Fiddler on the Roof" at the Minskoff Theatre on Broadway, Bartenieff is a classically trained actor with many who has performed many times on Broadway and has numerous television ("Law & Order," "American Dream"), and film credits ("See No Evil, Hear No Evil," "Paradise Lost," "Anima") on his resume.

George Bartenieff began his theatrical career on Broadway in 1947 at the age of 14. He has made a rich and varied life for himself as a performer, taking part in some of the most influential ensemble companies of the off-Broadway theatrical explosion and the off-off-Broadway experimental scene.

He was co-founder of the Theater for the New City, where for 24 years he produced and frequently acted in some 900 new American plays.

Bartenieff is also the winner of three *Village Voice* OBIE Awards for "Sustained Excellence as a Producer and as a Performer," and for his solo performance in "I Will Bear Witness," directed by his wife, Karen Malpede.

"The actor who embodies a holocaust

story does not have the luxury of playing imagined suffering, or a mythical ordeal," wrote Malpede, who adapted the diaries for the stage with her husband.

Buried for decades in East Germany, the diaries were first published in 1995. They record firsthand the experience of German fascism, and are some of the most important documents of their kind in existence. They note each act of kindness, suffering, resistance, and heroism Klemperer witnessed under the reign of Nazi terrorism.

Victor Klemperer, who died in 1960, was a journalist and distinguished professor of Romance Literature at Dresden, and an assimilated German Jew. The misery of Klemperer's life is complicated by his refusal to accept Jewishness as the sole determinant of his identity.

"I think German. I am German. I can't take it out of myself," he writes. "There is another Germany of which the Nazis are not representative."

He was a baptized Protestant married to a well-connected "Aryan" woman, and was a World War I veteran. Although saved from the concentration camps, he did not entirely avoid the rampages of the Third Reich.

Klemperer took note of the spreading fear, the silencing of dissent, and the erosion of freedom in the early Hitler years.

As a result, the diary itself became a source of terror, its pages distributed among gentle friends, folded into old scholarly books, likely to be ignored during the increasingly-frequent house searches by Gestapo squads. If discovered, the diary would have cost him his life.

"I Will Bear Witness" is a testimonial, both to the worst century in history, and to the resilience of the human spirit.

"I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer, Part 1, 1933-38," will be performed at the Brackett Memorial Church, Nov. 18 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$8 (\$4 for students) may be purchased at the time of the performance. Each performance will be followed by a question and answer session and a reception. For further information, contact Jo Josephson at 778-2021.

"I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer, Part 1, 1933-38," is co-sponsored by the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine, the University of Maine at Augusta, and the Wilton Congregational Church. Funding has been provided by the Maine Humanities Council and the Friends of Temple Stream Theater.

Peaks Police log

Oct. 1: Assist citizen, no address given; drinking in public, Island Avenue.

Oct. 2: Animal complaint, Whaleback Road.

Oct. 3: Serving paperwork, Woods Road.

Oct. 6: Parking complaint, no address given.

Oct. 7: Loud party, no address given; pedestrian check, no address given; intoxicated person, Island Avenue; loud party, Whitehead Street; pedestrian check, Island Avenue; EMS call, Central Avenue.

Oct. 8: 911 hang-up calls, Island Avenue; EMS call, Willow Street.

Oct. 9: Parking complaint, Welch Street; parking complaint, same Welch Street address; broken down motor vehicle, no address given; assist citizen, no address given; persons bothering, Island Avenue.

Oct. 11: Animal complaint at one Pleasant Avenue address; general offense and check well-being at second Pleasant Avenue address; general offense, no address given; Animal complaint at third Pleasant Avenue address; animal complaint, no address given.

Oct. 13: Assist citizen, no address given; EMS call, no address given; EMS call, no address given.

Oct. 14: EMS call, Luther Street.

Oct. 15: Assist citizen, Welch Street; liquor/possession by minor, no address given; violation of bail conditions, City Point Road; suspicious activity, no address given; EMS call, abdominal pains, Reed Avenue.

Oct. 16: Suspicious activity, no address given; property found, Seashore Avenue; check well-being, no address given; EMS call, well-being check, no address given.

Oct. 17: Assist other agency, Central Avenue; animal complaint, second Central Avenue address; EMS call, medical alarm.

Oct. 18: Escorts, no address given.

Oct. 19: Animal complaint, Centennial Street; parking complaint, Welch Street; EMS call, Island Avenue.

Oct. 20: Serving paperwork, Park Avenue.

Oct. 21: Special detail, Church Avenue; EMS call, no address given; EMS call, chest pains, Maple Street.

Oct. 24: Check well-being, Seashore Avenue.

Oct. 25: Report of wires down.

Oct. 27: Alarm/burglary, Island Avenue; follow-up, no address given.

Oct. 28: Special detail, Church Avenue; assist citizen, Winding Way; EMS call, falls, no address given.

Oct. 31: Follow-up, Island Avenue; intoxicated person, second Island Avenue address.

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Send us your community notes!

The Island Times welcomes your announcements of island events and happenings. Please type a short summary of the event (no more than 100 words long) including the time, date and place (including street address) and contact person for more information. Information should be submitted by the 15th of the month before the Island Times publishes. Announcements can be sent to: itimes@maine.rr.com, or mailed to: Island Times, 146 Ledgewood Road, Peaks Island, ME 04108.

Three Squares a Day

By Cevia Rosol copyright 2005

Across

1. Casement
5. Italian label
10. Rods
14. She gets whatever she wants
15. Creator of Star Wars
16. Old World buffalo
17. Common suffix for gases (pl.)
18. Eat the scenery
19. Popular romance author Michaels
20. This "square" comes with sleeping accommodations
23. Pioneered
24. Eagle's home
25. Obstruct
28. Lobster eating paraphernalia
30. Binary star in the constellation Centaurus
31. Cause to be in a state of complete confusion
33. Krazy
36. This "square" comes with bitter beer and pickled eggs
40. Alternative to grass seed
41. Historic 66, for example
42. Fruity alternative to Coke or Pepsi
43. Beamed
44. Shiny cotton fabric
46. Do in

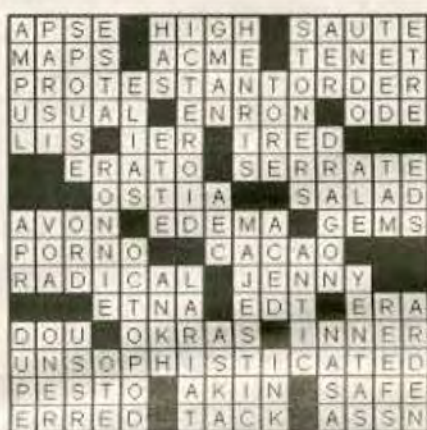
49. Char. set representing text in communications equipment
51. This "square" comes with breath control
57. Roman road
58. A dam site!
59. He played Tony on "NYPD Blue"
60. Blood vessel
61. Warning signal
62. Hold out
63. Consequently
64. Counterweights
65. Belgian front in World War I

10. Solecisms
11. Something to lend?
12. What's left of many ancient sculptures
13. A votre
21. Edward's nickname
22. It replaced Qandahar as capital city
25. Little devils
26. Minderbinder in "Catch-22"
27. Egg on
28. Nemesis
29. No ___ ands or buts
31. Lampblack
32. DC's Hernandez or Cordero
33. Supporter of a proposal
34. Long
35. Dilute

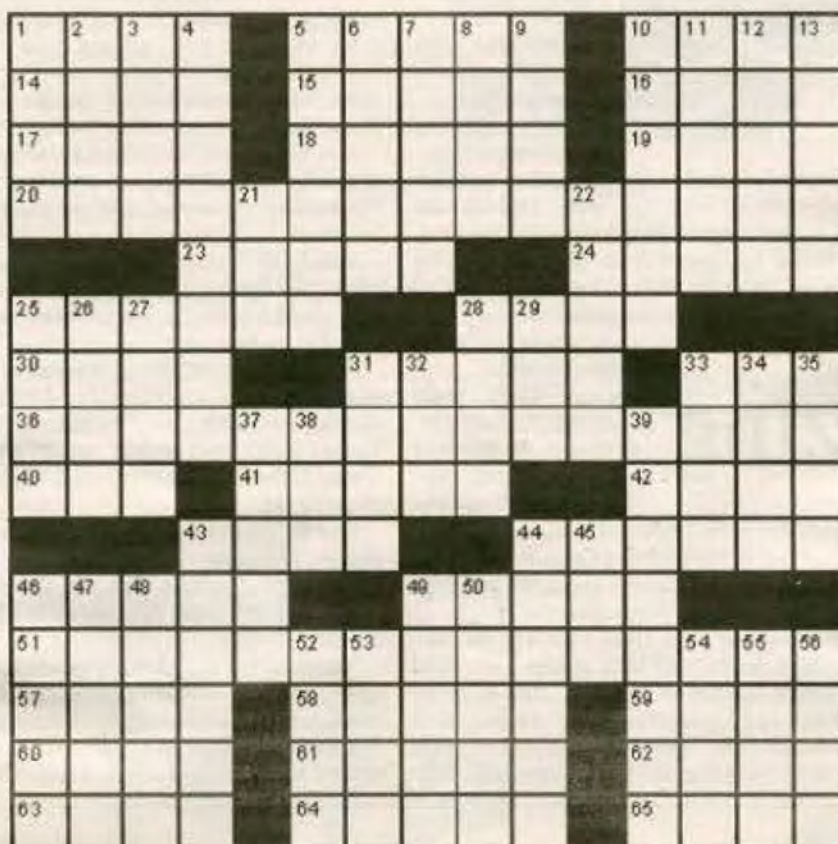
37. Germaine ___, diva of feminism
38. Sweetie
39. Premature or inopportune
43. Caterer's heat source
44. "Hamlet" has 20
45. Strain
46. Forfeit
47. Arthur Miller's "___ the Fall"
48. He masterminded Shrek
49. 1978 Peace Nobel to his friends
50. Surgical or musical instrument
52. Crackers
53. Cuba to natives
54. Egyptian goddess of fertility
55. Church center
56. Stadium section

Down

1. Bacon unit
2. Topnotch
3. Where runners may be found
4. Is engaged, perhaps
5. Greek wannabe
6. "___ Matumba" (Amaz hit)
7. This may be caused by ill-fitting shoes
8. Fix in history
9. On the main



Solution to last month's puzzle



BRIEFS, from page 2

facility. The state ended up rejecting all bids, and had to seek new proposals from contractors who could coordinate both the design and construction of the project at a cheaper cost, and still finish it by 2007.

Ferry candidates

There is only one contested race for the Board of Directors of the Casco Bay Islands Transit District. The race for the seat representing Great Diamond Island features Robert Laughlin, who lists his residence as South Portland, against Richard Frantz, who lists his residence as Great Diamond Island. The two are running for the seat held by Elizabeth Weber, who chose not to run again. All races are for three-year seats. Patrick Flynn, elected to fill out the rest of a three-year term held by his father, John Flynn, is running for the Peaks Island seat. And Arlen Davis, who represents Little Diamond Island, is running for re-election. All islanders can vote for every seat on the Casco Bay Lines board, according to Susan Williams, Casco Bay Lines administrative assistant. Those who plan to vote in the election must be registered to vote on one of the islands, even if they live on the mainland during the winter.

-David Tyler

Please call us with your story ideas at 766-0951. Or send us an email at itimes@maine.rr.com.

Anyone who would like to write articles for the Island Times is also invited to contact us with your story ideas. Thanks.

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Illustration by Jamie Hogan

BY MICHAEL RICHARDS

Our planetary neighbors grace our evening skies this month, one planet on each side of us, reflecting the sun's light.

Mars rises in the east after sunset, glowing like an ember in the darkening sky, and Venus blazes low in the southwest but will disappear below the horizon even as Mars climbs higher. Mars is too cold and dry for life, its mass too small to create gravity enough to hold its atmosphere; and Venus is too hot and steamy, its atmosphere too acidic and dense to permit life to bloom.

Between them is our mother Earth, with plenty of gravity to hold its atmosphere and just the right distance from the sun to create temperatures suitable for plants and animals to flourish and evolve over millions of

Star Gazing

and Jupiter loom into view in the distance, but the space news this month will focus on Mars, as Earth finally catches it and gets as close as it will be to Mars until 2018; hey, reason enough to buy that telescope you've always wanted!

Stars make their own light, of course, although 98 percent of the mass in the universe is dark. The constellations move westward by about 1 degree per day, so in the evening Cygnus the Swan is now west of the zenith, replaced there by mighty Pegasus the Winged Horse.

After supper on a clear evening, go outside, face north, and look straight up. Find the Great Square of Pegasus, then look for his head and forelegs to the left, and his hind legs to the right. With your binoculars, look just below his legs for the Andromeda Gal-

axy glowing softly in the vast distance. In the morning before dawn, our sky's brightest star, Sirius, shines low in the south.

It's so bright, because it's so close: only 8.7 light-years away. To its right is Orion the Hunter, further right is Taurus the Bull, and then the star cluster Pleiades. Of course, you'll have to get up early to see them, as daylight-saving time just ended, bringing an hour more of light in the morning and an hour more of dark in the evening.

Nov. 1: Sunrise is now at 6:17 a.m., so those on the early boat to town will get to see it. Sunset at 4:32 p.m., so those on the 4:30 p.m. boat home will get a ringside seat. New moon this morning at 8:25 a.m., but it's well below the ecliptic, so no solar or lunar eclipses this month.

Nov. 3: Venus and Mercury are both at greatest elongation from the sun this evening. Around 5 p.m. tonight, look out over South Portland: a thin crescent moon sits right on the horizon, just below Mercury. Binoculars will help gather the light.

Nov. 4: The Southern Taurid meteor shower peaks this morning before dawn high in the southwestern sky, and no moon up to interfere.

Nov. 5: Between 5 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. tonight, the crescent moon sits next to Venus over Cape Elizabeth: the prettiest conjunction this month.

Nov. 6: Mars reaches opposition to the sun early tomorrow morning. The Earth is now directly between them, so Mars will rise at sunset today and before sunset hereafter. Venus is the farthest south that it gets in the evening sky.

Nov. 8: First quarter moon will be high in the sky at sunset, moderating tides and currents. Neptune lurks dimly in the distance just above it tonight, daring you to try to find it.

Nov. 10: Waxing gibbous moon is at perigee, its closest to Earth this month, ideal for telescopic viewing along the terminator line between light and dark. Tides will run higher and lower than normal, especially is the

moon approaches full.

Nov. 11: Northern Taurid meteor shower for the next week or so, but the moon's getting bigger and brighter every night.

Nov. 14: A nearly full moon sits above Mars tonight.

Nov. 15: Full moon tonight, with Mars above and to the right, and Pleiades below and to the left. I expect the moonshine to wash Pleiades nearly out of view, but Mars is just too close to Earth to be bothered much by it. Highest tide this month is today at 10:03 a.m., and lowest tide is at 4:26 p.m., a difference of 11.8 feet, so mid-day ocean currents will be swift and strong.

Nov. 17: The Leonid meteor shower peaks before dawn this morning in the eastern sky. Set your alarm for 4 a.m., grab coffee and blanket, and head backshore.

Nov. 21: Yellow Saturn sits to the right of a little waning gibbous moon low in the eastern sky late tonight, when you should be in bed.

Nov. 23: Last quarter moon is high in the sky at sunrise. It's at apogee, so it'll be noticeably smaller than it was 2 weeks ago. The difference between low and high tides now is a mere 5.8 feet.

Nov. 29: As the 6:15 a.m. boat pulls away from Peaks this morning, look back over the island: a small waning crescent moon hangs below Jupiter in the dawn sky.

Nov. 30: Sunrise is now at 6:54 a.m. and sunset is at 4:06 p.m. Just before dawn today, a crescent moon will rise low in the east and be so thin it will be hard to see in the gathering light. At dusk, Venus is a thick crescent and will set low in the southwest, so incredibly bright it will be impossible to miss.

Happy
Thanksgiving!

CHEBEAGUE, from page 1

the Chebeague Island Community Association sent out mailings to both island and mainland residents, and took out full-page ads in local newspapers.

Chebeague's secession process is complicated. If the vote on the island is in favor of leaving Cumberland, the Town Council will then vote on the issue. If a majority of councilors approve the request, the matter is sent to the State Legislature. If the council turns down secession, the two sides begin negotiations to try and resolve the issues that led to secession. If the two sides still cannot agree after a mediator is brought in, the matter is then sent to the State Legislature.

State Sen. Terrence P. McKenney, a Republican who represents Cumberland, Long Island and North Yarmouth, agreed to submit a bill on Chebeague secession for the next session of the Legislature.

On Oct. 27, a bipartisan group of 10 legislative leaders voted to allow the Chebeague secession bill to be considered next year. There was a possibility that the bill could have been delayed until January, 2007, when a new legislature is elected.

Proponents of secession are also working with officials from the state Department of Education for Chebeague to leave its school district, SAD 51, as well.

It was concerns about the island school that was one of the trigger's of the self-governance movement. In March, island residents protested a proposal by SAD 51 officials to cut the fourth and fifth grade classes from the Chebeague Island School, and require those children to attend mainland schools. After islanders made their concerns known at school committee meetings, the proposal was dropped. But the threat to the island school, the heart of any island community, led many islanders to begin organizing a secession movement.

At an Oct. 18 public hearing held at the Chebeague Island Hall, Cumberland Town Manager Bill Shane presented his estimate of the financial impact secession would have on Cumberland. There were also six of the seven town councilors at the hearing to listen to what islanders had to say about secession. Two of the mainland councilors said they would be in favor of Chebeague including 15 additional islands in its secession territory, which has been a point of conten-

tion on the council.

Chebeague is valued at about \$111,500,000 and generates \$2.1 million in property taxes, he said. Cumberland sends 73 percent of the taxes it collects to SAD 51, with 23 percent of the taxes going to town services.

Given a best-case scenario, Chebeague leaving Cumberland would result in a shortage of about \$130,000 for the town. Given that the budget numbers from the school are difficult to calculate, Shane said the loss of Chebeague would mean a loss of as little as 17 cents per thousand on Cumberland's tax rate, to as much as 90 cents per thousand.

Mark Dyer, one of five secession representatives, said they calculated the impact to be 25 cents per thousand on the town tax rate.

Shane also analyzed data from Cumberland's last re-assessment of town property, and concluded that 73 percent of the 202 year-round families on Chebeague kept their property taxes flat or received a decrease after the revaluation.

However, the town manager said that the town's valuation is not keeping up with the market. Overall, homes in Cumberland are at about 70 percent of market value. Homes on Chebeague are at 53 to 55 percent of market value.

A revaluation of Cumberland property would strongly impact Chebeague this time. "If your home is valued at 53 percent of its actual value, then you could see about a 31 percent increase in taxes," said Shane. "That's the truth. No sugar-coating. I'm just hitting you over the head with a two-by-four on this one, but that's the truth."

Those homes at 63 percent of market value would only see an increase of 10 percent in their taxes, and those homes valued at 70 percent would see little change in their taxes.

Shane said he did not want to see Chebeague leave. "I think we have councilors who serve the citizens of Chebeague very, very well," he said. "I have a hard time with it personally, because I think we can do more than we can do individually. And a community is about coming together to do things that we can't do as separate entities."

Island resident Donna Damon, the Chebeague representative on the town council, said there are larger issues, in addition to the financial impacts of secession. "I don't want to lose sight of some of the other issues, and

it really is how do we maintain a community. And how do we keep it from becoming gentrified."

"I've come to the realization that we share a government but we are not a community in the true sense of a community with the mainland."

Dyer said it is time for Chebeague to go out on its own. "Cumberland is a good parent right now," he said. "They've done the best they can for us in a lot of ways. But let's face it—we're a different animal over here ... It's a different way of life out here."

Island resident Barbara Porter said she had many concerns about secession. "I'm not at all sure that we should secede. I'm not sure if it's best for us. I would like to see us go on working together to take care of the very complicated resources of the town."

Porter said she was concerned about the budget figures presented by secession proponents. "I think we're facing a future fight between spenders and savers," she said. She said there will be islanders who will want to control spending and keep taxes down. There will be other islanders who want the same services, or more services, which will cost a lot in the long run.

Porter was also worried about "social costs. I'm afraid of divisiveness. I love this island. It's a feisty island. We all know we've got disagreements that go back three or four generations. But I'm afraid that this is going to make it harder for us to work together."

Mabel Doughty, one of the five secession representatives, read a statement about secession. "The secession vote is about how we want Chebeague to be one, two, three generations beyond 2005. We can better decide how we would like it to look then how the Town of Cumberland, with all due respect ... might see us in the future."

Council Chair Bill Stiles raised concerns about insurance costs and the bond rating for a new town of Chebeague. "If this experiment or this secession fails, you folks are in a real mess, because it's tough to go back. I really don't want to see that."

Other than has concerns, "I have no animosity," he said, and would work with a Town of Chebeague, if that happens, to form regional services.

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CASCO BAY, from page 1

population, impervious surfaces, combined sewer outflows, shellfish, swimming beaches, protected land, undeveloped land, water birds, eelgrass, sediments, mussels, water quality, inland water quality and stewardship.

The most striking indicator is a "soaring growth in population and an outward expansion of population density from the Greater Portland area to the suburban and rural areas to the west," according to the report's authors.

Between 1970 and 2005, while the population of the cities of Portland and South Portland remained relatively stable, rural and suburban communities experienced tremendous growth. Towns such as Raymond and Naples grew 250 percent in that period.

Suburban sprawl eats up undeveloped land and creates more impervious surfaces, which leads to air water pollution in Casco Bay, according to the report.

Between 1982 and 1997, the population of Greater Portland increased 17 percent, but farmland and forest conversion to urban uses increased by 108 percent, according to the report. Only eight other metropolitan areas in the nation had a greater rate of sprawl.

That population growth means that nine of the 41 municipalities in the watershed have no unfragmented blocks of habitat larger than 2,000 acres left.

Impervious surfaces cover about 5.9 percent of the Casco Bay watershed, according to the report. This is important, because these surfaces alter natural water flow. Rain and snow runoff, that would normally seep back into the ground, drain directly into stormwater drains and water bodies, picking up pollutants. Studies of the impact of urbanization on two Casco Bay streams showed that regions with impervious surface coverage of over 7 percent had poor to fair water quality, according to the report.

However, some indicators of the bay and watershed's health show progress.

The volume and frequency of combined sewer overflows has decreased since 1996. "There is very significant progress," said Young. Combined sewers are systems which carry both stormwater and sanitary sewage. Since the 1990s, 20 combined sewer overflows in the Casco Bay area have been shut down, according to the report. The volume of Portland's flows have decreased from 720 million gallons in 1996 to about 607 million gallons in 2004, which was a very rainy year.

The number of acres open to shellfishing has dramatically increased since 1994. The economic value of the shellfish industry in the bay is estimated at between \$11.6 million and \$15.7 million annually. And the total approved acreage for shellfishing has increased from 140,014 acres in 1994 to 177,954 in 2004, according to the report.

"Regardless, if you're a commercial harvester or just want to go out on the fourth of July, there are a lot more areas that you can go out and harvest clams from the bay, and that's a positive thing," said Young.

And despite the suburban sprawl, protected land in Casco Bay has increased by nearly 50 percent since 1997. In 1997, 7,300 acres of protected land at 246 sites were found; in 2005, 3,600 additional acres at 95 new sites were identified.

Another positive sign for the bay, according to the report, is an increase in eelgrass in the bay. According to the report's authors, eelgrass, which grows in the sediment in low intertidal and shallow subtidal environments, can form dense meadows that provide a habitat for fish and wildlife. Eelgrass also protects the shoreline from waves and currents and improves water quality by filtering and absorbing nutrients.

In 1993-94, 7,056 acres of eelgrass were present and in 2001-2002, 8,248 acres were found, according to the report.

Finally, the levels of toxic chemicals in the bay have declined or remained unchanged in the past decade.

One of the biggest challenges for the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership is that major, single-source water polluters were shut down in the 1970s. "Now the type of pollution we're talking about is in my yard, and the way I wash my car and the way I take care of my lawn, and the paint I use on my house and how I dispose of that," said Young. "And getting to a quarter-of-a-million people and the way they live their life is not a simple fix. It's hard changing individual behavior."

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Playing ball to save the ballfield woods

BY DAVID TYLER

On a damp October day, a group of about 30 hardy souls played a softball game on a waterlogged field to help raise funds for the Peaks Island Land Preserve, which helped preserve the wooded land used to access the City Acres Ball Park on Peaks Island.

"Home plate was a puddle," said Brenda Buchanan, a Peaks Island resident, of the Oct. 16 event, which had already been postponed from Columbus Day weekend because of rain. "Quite a few people went home with wet sneakers."

The game raised \$2,378 from players, sponsors and island businesses, according to Buchanan. Almost every island business and many mainland companies run or owned by islanders helped underwrite the event, she said.

Although the five-acre ball field is owned

help replenish funds PILP already spent to preserve the Ballfield Woods. Since 2001, three parcels were purchased, totaling three-and-a-half acres, at a cost of \$83,000.

The capital campaign finishes at the end of the year, and so far about \$31,000 has been raised, according to Buchanan. In addition, the Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay, which works closely with PILP, has offered a \$10,000 matching grant for the Ballfield Woods. If PILP can raise \$10,000, Oceanside will contribute \$10,000 to the fund. So far, \$5,428 has been raised for that match, said Buchanan.

Buchanan credits Bob Skillings with bringing the idea of the matching grant to Oceanside. Skillings, who had been a member of the Oceanside board (he retired from the board in August), had already given his own family's property near Echo Pond, called Skillings Woods, to be preserved as conservation land. The land was part of a large farm owned by his ancestor, Robert F. Skillings, in the 1850s. When he heard about the ball field woods, he went to Oceanside because "putting up a matching grant would encourage other people to contribute," he said.

The drive to preserve the Ballfield Woods actually began back in 2001. Buchanan said PILP members received calls that for sale signs had been put up on one of the parcels used to access the ball field. "People just really reacted when the for sale signs went up," she said.

The wooded path which leads to the ball field was seen by islanders as a crucial part of the ball park. The playing fields are city-owned. But development threatened the wooded path.

"I think a lot of people just have very fond memories of the ball field," said Buchanan. "And part of what makes it special is that it's surrounded by woods. You can make as much noise as you want."

When baseball teams from the mainland come to Peaks Island to play, they are always impressed by the ball field, and it's wooded path. "They have said it's mag-

ical," said Buchanan.

The first parcel consisted of three adjacent parcels, totaling almost two acres, and was priced at \$35,000. In June, 2001, an anonymous island family donated \$10,000 towards buying the first parcel, Buchanan said. The owner of the three parcels, Noel Valdez, who lives in Brunswick, then agreed to hold the mortgage, allowing PILP to gradually pay off the remaining purchase price. A balance of \$5,000 remains on that mortgage remains, she said.



Lisa Lynch wears flippers during the softball game for the Ballfield Woods. The game was played on a field that was sopping wet from all the October rains. Photo by Kathie Schneider



Dexter Morse tosses the ball as he prepares to pitch at the Oct. 16 softball game which benefited the drive to save the Ballfield Woods. Photo by Kathie Schneider

by the city, the access path from Luther Street was privately owned. Over four years ago, these woods were threatened by development.

This past summer, Peaks Island Land Preserve (PILP) kicked off a capital campaign to finish the fundraising for the woods, which have already been protected.

Buchanan is the co-coordinator of the Ballfield Woods Capital Campaign, along with Jane Banquer. The softball game was held by PILP as part of a capital campaign, which began in August, to raise \$50,000 to



Norm Proulx pitches at the softball game, which raised \$2,378 to help pay for preserving the Ballfield Woods. Photo by Kathie Schneider

In May, 2002, another half-acre parcel came onto the market. With the help of donations from neighbors and money from PILP, that section was purchased at a price of \$15,000 from the owner, George Walker.

In July of this year, PILP decided to enter a contract for the final parcel, at a price

of \$33,000. Buchanan said PILP is grateful to the seller, Scott Brown, who originally offered the parcel for \$40,000, but agreed to sell it for \$33,000. "It was a key parcel, because it connects the first piece and the second piece," said Buchanan.

Buchanan also praised the members of the Ballfield Woods Fundraising Committee: John Carroll and Sue Merrow, Mere Roberts, Gene Taylor, Bob Vilforth, Don Webster and John Whitman.

The last piece was the biggest challenge, since the original asking price was so high, Buchanan said. But Vilforth urged the group to pursue it. "He was one of the strongest advocates for being bold and moving forward," she said.

Vilforth is also the steward for the Ballfield Woods. Each conservation property owned by PILP and Oceanside Trust has a steward to make regular visits to properties, to make sure there isn't trash or invasive species.

Skillings first came to Peaks Island as a boy in the 1920s. He spent summers on the island until he went to college. He said it is important to maintain land on Peaks that everyone can use. "These islands are getting overrun with people who want to use them for summer recreation, but want them with large, private homes, which restricts the access of the public to go on the land," he said. "We are not going to stop it, but we can limit it by choosing important property that is available and putting it under conservation easement."

Community Notes

HCD meeting

The Peaks Island annual Housing and Community Development meeting will be held on Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Peaks Island Elementary School. Although Peaks Island as a whole is no longer eligible for HCD grants, the Peaks Island Children's Workshop is, based on the income of families who send their children to the workshop.

Ode to Albert

GEM Gallery will present "Ode to Albert" a group show inspired by the eccentric life of Albert Ventres, a lifelong resident of Peaks Island who died last year in his home. The show will be from Nov. 18-19. Mr. Ventres's summer home on Pleasant Street, empty but still in its dilapidated state, will be the venue for this most unusual show. Dress warmly. Time and directions will be posted on the community board the week of the show.

Pie sale

Would you like to have a delicious fresh baked pie made by a Peaks Island pie baker to complete your Thanksgiving feast? The choices are many: apple, apple-cranberry, apple-pear, pumpkin, pecan, and sweet po-

tato. Pies are \$15 each and can be ordered by calling Kathryn Moxhay (766-2756), Kathy Hanley (766-5669), or the Peaks Island School (766-2528) until Fri., Nov. 18. Pies will be delivered Nov. 22 and 23, on island only. So call and order your pies now, and happy Thanksgiving from the Peaks Island School PTO.

Free health screening

The Peaks Island Children's workshop will be hosting free health screenings for preschool kids ages 3-5 years old on Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 8:30 am until noon. The City of Portland Department of Public Health will be offering vision, hearing and lead screenings, as well as blood pressure, height and weight checks. Your child does not have to be attending preschool at the workshop in order to participate. If you are interested in having your child take part in this free opportunity, please call the Children's Workshop at 766-2854.

Friday Playgroup

A pre-school playgroup meets every Friday from 10:15 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Peaks Island Children's Workshop on Peaks Island.

Playgroup is usually cancelled with inclement weather. Call 766-2854 to check in.

Music on Peaks

The theme of this year's Annual Holiday Concert and Sing-along is "international families." Islanders will gather once again Sun., Dec. 11 at 2:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Brackett Memorial Church for this popular event, sponsored by PIMA and directed by

Nancy 3. Hoffman. A suggested donation of \$5 for adults and \$1 for children is requested, with the proceeds going to a worthwhile charity. Come celebrate the holiday season with your favorite island performers, including the Mando Commandoes, the Maine Squeeze, the Peaks Island Chorale directed by Faith York, the Uncalled Four, and many more. For more information, call Nancy 3. at 766-4496.

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